



SPRING 2014



Wounded Warriors Project

Officer Remains Devoted to Supporting Fellow Veterans

John Bennette's years in the Army weren't spent seated behind some desk in a climate-controlled office, talking on the phone and rearranging piles of paper.

"I was straight infantry," said Bennette, a ranger graduate who served in the 82nd Airborne Division. "I was in the trenches."



Pictured at the New Jersey Department of Corrections' Departmental Service Awards ceremony are (from left) NJDOC Commissioner Gary M. Lanigan; Senior Correction Officer John Bennette; and wife Melissa Bennette, a communications operator at East Jersey State Prison.

Those experiences, he added, never will be forgotten – no matter how hard he might try. Bennette has spent the last two-plus decades as a member of the New Jersey Department of Corrections custody staff. After a lengthy stint at Albert C. Wagner Youth Correctional Facility, he moved on to the Custody Recruitment Unit in 2008.

Through it all, however, his commitment to his fellow veterans has never waned, as is evidenced by the countless hours he has

devoted to the Wounded Warriors Project. Wounded Warriors provides direct programs and services to meet the needs of injured service members. Furthermore, Bennette, a trustee for New Jersey Policeman's Benevolent Association (PBA), Local 105, heads up the union's Veterans Committee.

"When I came home, I was truly humbled when people showed their gratitude," he said. "It gives you a reason to smile at a time when you might not feel good about yourself inside. I want our veterans to know how much their service is appreciated, and I want to make sure they know that if they are in need of help or support, it's available."

The 82nd Airborne Division specializes in parachute assault operations, and Bennette made more than 100 jumps, some under the most trying conditions imaginable. His resume includes four years of active duty and another four years in the Reserves. As a soldier, he fought in Operation Just Cause – the invasion of Panama by the United States in 1989 that led to the removal of de facto Panamanian leader, general and dictator Manuel Noriega – as well as in Operation Desert Storm in 1990 in response to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. He was awarded a Bronze Star, a Purple Heart and later a Distinguished Service Medal from the Governor of New Jersey.

A short time after returning home, Bennette went to work for the NJDOC. Even with the passage of time, however, the memories of combat remain vivid.

"You never really get over the issues," Bennette, 44, related, "In my experience, there is nothing more stressful than being shot at. There is nothing that makes you want to advance toward a target that is shooting back at you. But that's what a soldier does. A soldier follows orders and does what he's supposed to do.

"When you go into the military, they teach you how to deal with situations," he continued. "You have to become numb to certain things. You have to be able to move on, to fight harder than anyone else, and you can't show any signs of weakness. There you are, going through all kinds of trauma, and you keep it all inside. I still remember soldiers on the other side of the line whose lives I had to take – soldiers who probably believed they were doing the right thing. That's something I live with every day."

Bennette also lives with memories of soldiers on his side of the line who died in the line of duty.

"When I was maybe 19 years old, there was a guy who I went through basic training with, and he got shot in the chest and was bleeding to death," he recalled. "He kept saying to me, 'Don't let me die here.' Those images are burned into my mind. How could you not be affected by that?"

Bennette knew he was affected, but he spent years trying to pretend he wasn't.

"It seemed like my anxiety and depression were getting worse as I got older," he said. "I finally went to get help when my son asked me, 'Dad, why are you always so angry?'"

"It was over small, insignificant things. A glass of milk would spill, and I'd react like it was a matter of life or death. Everybody has a different breaking point. Fortunately, I got help before I found out where my breaking point is."

Bennette was diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder.

"I didn't want to talk to a doctor," he confessed. "I saw that as a sign of weakness. At some point, I had to stand up and say that if I needed help, I owed it to my loved ones, and I owed it to myself, to take the step. It's certainly nothing to be ashamed of."

That's the message he's striving to spread to fellow veterans in his capacity with the PBA, Local 105, Veterans Committee.

"The New Jersey Department of Corrections has a lot of veterans," he noted, "and if any of them need assistance, they should contact me. I'll get them help. I have various contacts, different advocacy groups I deal with. Take it from me: I had no idea what was out there for me or what I was entitled to until I went for help."

Bennette is equally passionate about his work with the Wounded Warriors Project. At last October's Departmental Service Awards ceremony, in fact, his efforts on behalf of the Wounded Warriors earned him the NJDOC's Distinguished Service Award. The award recognizes unusually effective or distinguished service to either the department or the community.

"I don't know if any of us are built to endure the kinds of horrors so many soldiers experience," he explained. "That's why I try to reach out and help. These are individuals who can be very productive members of society, but we have to make sure they're pointed in the right direction, so to speak."

"I've been down that dark road. I know what it feels like to have those feelings bubbling inside of you and not have a release. People need to understand the disorders so many of these soldiers have, and the soldiers need to realize they're not alone.

"That," Bennette concluded, "is what the Wounded Warriors Project is all about."





SPRING 2014



Dog-Gone It!

Senior Correction Officer Locates Missing Canine

A few minutes before the beginning of a class during which Senior Correction Officer Myron Kelley would serve as a trainer for a group of canines and their handlers, someone wanted to know about the missing dog.

Missing dog? What missing dog?

"I told the guy who asked that I hadn't heard anything about a dog that was missing," related Kelley, a New Jersey Department of Corrections employee for more than two decades and a canine trainer for five years.

"The guy said he heard Vinnie's dog is missing," he continued. "so we went looking for Vinnie and his dog, but they were nowhere to be found."

"Vinnie" was Vinnie Santaniello, an officer with the Ocean County Sheriff Department's Canine Unit, and his dog was Jack, a year-old Chesapeake Bay retriever. On December 23, the day of the incident, less than a week remained in what had been a 16-week training course in narcotics



Senior Correction Officer Officer Myron Kelley is joined by canine partner Nikkolai.

detection. The participants in the course included Santaniello and Jack.

Before Kelley had concluded his search for the handler and canine, the situation at and around Allaire State Park in Wall Township – the training site – already was becoming chaotic.

“People started pulling up with ATVs, and everyone was trying to figure out exactly what was going on,” Kelley recalled. “Things were getting crazy.”

Apparently, while unleashed, the canine had spotted a deer in the woods and gave chase. The handler went into the woods after his dog, but the canine vanished into the elements. By the time the handler emerged from the woods, hours had elapsed.

It didn’t take long for word about the missing dog to spread, particularly after the Ocean County Sheriff’s Department issued a press release announcing that Jack’s whereabouts were unknown.

The search was on. In addition to a significant law enforcement presence that included the Howell and Wall Township police, the search party included more than 100 civilians.

“People from everywhere came out to look for the canine,” Kelley related. “Members of a bike club were going up and down the trails in the park. So were joggers. There were a bunch of folks from the neighborhood taking part. It was pretty inspiring to see so many people come together for the cause.”

On Christmas Eve at approximately 2 p.m., more than 24 hours after the dog’s disappearance, Kelley encountered a police officer who had seen the canine sprint across Interstate 195 mere moments earlier.

“He ran away from the officer, but the officer was able to point us in the direction the dog had been running,” Kelley said. “At that point, we adjusted the perimeter – the search wasn’t much different than if we’d been searching for an escaped convict – and blocked off the highway. I got out of my vehicle, and when I looked down the road, I spotted the dog under a guardrail along [Interstate] 195, just off the highway.

“I’d been training the dog, so I knew he’d recognize me, but I also knew he’d be frightened. I took out the drug-scented towel we use during training

and waved the towel while I slowly approached him. When he saw me and didn't run away, I took that to be a positive sign. Then, when I got close to him, he grabbed the towel and jumped into my arms like a baby. He was scared to death.

"I could see the relief in his eyes," Kelley added. "Like everyone else, he was happy the ordeal was finally over."

Ironically, the spot where Kelley located the canine, near the intersection of Interstate 195 and Route 34, is barely a half-mile from where the incident unfolded the previous day.

Jack is a relatively small dog, and the fact that his chestnut coloring blended into the environment – "as if he was camouflaged," Kelley said – made the search particularly difficult. The canine was covered with ticks when he was found, and Kelley estimated that Jack had crossed the interstate two or three times while loose.

"What worried me just as much as the dog running across the highway was that there are coyotes in that area, and he wouldn't have been able to protect himself from coyotes," Kelley said. "But the most important thing is that it ended well, and the dog and his handler were able to complete the class and move on from there."

"I'll say this, though: It's not something any of us will forget any time soon."





SPRING 2014



The Heat Is On

Former Olympian Transitioning from Boxing to Corrections

Terrance Cauthen fondly recalls sitting in front of his black-and-white television to watch American boxers Sugar Ray Leonard and Pernell Whitaker battle their way to gold medals during the 1984 Olympic Games.



Terrance "Heat" Cauthen won a bronze medal in the 1996 Olympics, then embarked on a lengthy professional career.

"I was 8 years old at the time," Cauthen related, "and I remember saying, 'One day, that's going to be me.' Even back then, that was my goal. I always wanted to go to the Olympics."

Sure enough, 12 years later, Cauthen qualified for the boxing team that represented the United States in the 1996 Summer Olympics, which were held in Atlanta. Competing as a lightweight, the Trenton native, known in boxing circles as "Heat," won his first three matches before losing a controversial decision to Bulgarian Tontcho Tonchev and settling for a bronze medal.

Following the '96 Olympics, Cauthen embarked on a lengthy professional career, the final chapter of which still has yet to be written.

He also laid the groundwork for life after boxing by becoming part of the Basic Course for State Corrections Officers, Class 230, which graduated February 4, 2014. Since then, he has been a member of the custody staff at the Central Assignment and Reception Facility (CRAF).

"I hope to be with the Department of Corrections for the long haul," said Cauthen, who previously worked at the Bo Robinson Assessment and Treatment Center in Trenton. "This is where I want to be. It's not an easy job. There are a lot of things to process, but the staff has been really helpful, and I feel like I'm learning something new every day.

"I relate different things in my life to boxing," he continued. "In boxing, you put your time in, prepare yourself as well as possible, then you get your reward. It's no different here. At the [Correctional Staff Training] Academy, it was all about preparation, so that when you do become an officer, you're at your very best. I like that mindset."

It is a mindset that helped the 38-year-old Cauthen to become one of the top amateur boxers in the world in the mid-1990s. By the time he was 16, he was taking part in international competitions. At age 18, he was the top-ranked boxer in America in his weight class. Along the way, he won virtually every amateur tournament in the sport, including the Olympic Festival and the National Golden Gloves competition.

"My uncles on my mother's side were amateur boxers, and as a kid, I always wanted to be like them," Cauthen said. "So my mom got me a pair of boxing gloves, and from that point on, I was hooked. I tried other sports, but I always came back to boxing."

His devotion to boxing, did, however, have its limits. As a high school senior, he declined an opportunity to compete abroad because the trip would have caused him to miss his graduation from Trenton Central High School.

"I was picked to go on a trip to Thailand, but I would have had to leave on the same day as my graduation, and I wanted to walk down that isle and get my diploma," Cauthen said. "I remember the Trenton newspapers did articles about it."

Nevertheless, by the time the 1996 Olympic Trials arrived, Cauthen had extensive international experience and was considered a legitimate medal contender in the Olympics. That's why his loss to Jermaine Fields early in the trials was so stunning.

"Because of my ranking, I was offered another opportunity to fight Fields, but I refused," he said. "I was so mad at myself that I wanted to take the long way to a rematch. So I started from the beginning. I actually had to fight nine times to get another fight with Fields, and then I had to beat him twice in order to get his spot."

That is exactly what Cauthen did. As a result, he became a member of an American Olympic boxing contingent that included future world champions Floyd Mayweather – arguably the top star in the sport today – Antonio Tarver and David Reid.

"I'll never forget the opening ceremony," Cauthen reminisced. "Walking into a jam-packed stadium. Everyone was screaming and applauding. I looked around, took it all in and thought to myself, 'Wow, I'm really here.' It was an incredible feeling."

Although the medal he received was a different color than the one he aspired to win, he had no desire to spend four more years in the amateur ranks, then attempt to make the 2000 Olympic squad. So, on December 14, 1996, Cauthen launched his professional career in Atlantic City – on the undercard of a pay-per-view extravaganza headlined by Riddick Bowe – by winning a four-round unanimous decision over Victor Miller.

Cauthen went on to win 15 consecutive fights before suffering his first defeat, a fourth-round technical knockout to Teddy Reid. Following an 11-bout winning streak, Cauthen endured two consecutive losses, leaving his record at 26-3.

After a defeat in the spring of 2012, Cauthen decided to take an extended break from the sport. His record was 36-9, and along the way, he held a variety of regional titles. Furthermore, his sport enabled him to visit nearly every state in the union as well as countries across the globe, among them Russia, Cuba, Jamaica, England and Ireland. However, unlike some of his Olympic teammates, he never had a chance to fight for a world championship.

"What bothers me is that I never gave myself the best possible chance to succeed," Cauthen said. "I fought at 147 and 154 pounds, but my best fighting weight is 140. It's important for me to see what I can accomplish at that weight. I can't close the door on boxing yet. I want to give myself one more chance. I still believe I have a lot of fight left in me."

Much of his time away from CRAF is spent at the gym, and he is hoping to resume his career in June.

"Right now, I'm probably in the best shape of my life," said Cauthen, the father of five daughters, ages 20 to 2. "When you're young, you rely mostly on talent. Now that I'm older, I eat better, work out more consistently and take advantage of my experience.

"I don't want to look back and say, 'What if?' I promised my family and myself that I'd give it another year or so and see what happens. I'm confident that it will work out, but even if it doesn't, then I'll know it's time to move on with the rest of my life."





SPRING 2014



Across the Pond

NJDOC Employee Receives Fulbright Award, Bound for UK

The letter to Dr. Kristen Zgoba, dated February 25, 2014, began as follows: "On behalf of the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board (FSB), I am pleased to congratulate you on your selection for a Fulbright award to the United Kingdom."



Dr. Kristen Zgoba

It wasn't until much later that she got around to reading the rest of the one-page correspondence.

"I was overwhelmed," recalled Zgoba, the New Jersey Department of Corrections' supervisor of Research and Evaluation. "This is the ultimate award for an academic. Even though I still haven't fully processed it, I'm excited, I'm nervous, and I'm anxious to begin my work."

Previous Fulbright participants went on to become CEOs, judges, ambassadors, cabinet ministers, university presidents and even heads of state. Approximately 800 award recipients are selected annually in various disciplines from among thousands of applicants worldwide. Zgoba is one of only two individuals to have received a Fulbright award for 2014-2015 in the field of criminal justice.

Zgoba, whose research on sexual crimes and sex offender laws has been extensive, proposed testing sex crime legislation in the United Kingdom –

specifically, England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland – in terms of its impact on sex offense rates.

"This is the next logical step for the research, which has been done in the United States," said Zgoba, who received her doctoral degree from Rutgers University's School of Criminal Justice in 2004, the same year she began working at the NJDOC.

She will attend a three-day orientation in London in September, where she will meet with her fellow award winners. She then will return to the United Kingdom to begin her research in January 2015 and remain there through April.

Completing her work within the three-month time frame stipulated in her proposal "certainly is going to be a challenge," Zgoba admitted. "I'll be going to four different countries to collect sex-crime data with which I'm unfamiliar. These nations have overarching criminal justice systems that are vastly different from ours. It will be interesting to navigate among them."

She began work on the Fulbright application last July and managed to complete the process ahead of the late-August deadline.

"Some people start working on the application a year or so in advance. I started a month in advance," Zgoba related. "At one point, I didn't think I'd be able to pull it off. The application process was about 35 pages, with multiple steps and numerous questions I'd never answered before. I had to develop a five- to 10-page research proposal that laid out all of the steps in terms of methodology, analysis and sources of data."

Along with her application, Zgoba, who has taught both undergraduate and graduate classes at Rutgers since 2002, needed to provide support and approval letters from a host institution in the United Kingdom. That institution turned out to be the University of West London, which proceeded to offer her a visiting professorship during her stay. The requirements also included three letters of recommendation, one of which was written by NJDOC Commissioner Gary Lanigan.

Roughly six weeks after the application deadline, Zgoba received notification from the FSB that she had survived the peer review process, which consisted of a panel of researchers vetting the research proposed in the application. Her sources indicated that was a significant development.

"Peer review is apparently where the vast majority of applicants are rejected," she said.

The next level of review began on Capitol Hill and subsequently was transferred to the Fulbright Commission of the United Kingdom in England. In December, Zgoba learned that she made it through those stages. The final step came in late January in the form of a telephone interview. Exactly five weeks after that interview, she received a letter of congratulations.

"I took a day to let it soak in, then I began getting the necessary paperwork together," she said, "There's so much to be done. I need to get a UK Visa, medical clearance, open a British bank account and even get a UK driver's license, which means I'll need to learn to drive on the opposite side of the road."

In addition, Zgoba needs to make living arrangements in each of the four venues in which she will be collecting and analyzing data. Perhaps most important, she must make sure every element of her research is set up well in advance. That process, in fact, already has begun.

Her timetable will be no less hectic once she actually begins her work in the United Kingdom. Still, she is determined to truly experience the countries she visits. Furthermore, Zgoba, an avid distance runner, is hoping to take part in the 2015 London Marathon, which is held each April.

"Being a Fulbright scholar obviously comes first," she said. "My top priority will be getting the research done. That said, as long as I'm able to do the research and remain in full compliance with what I've proposed, I do plan to explore.

"At this point, I don't know to expect or, for that matter, where I'll be living," Zgoba continued, "but I'm looking so forward to finding out."





SPRING 2014



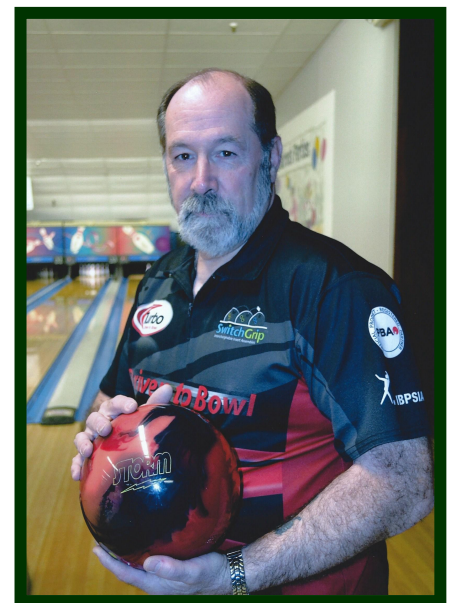
Life in the Fast Lane

Longtime DEPTCOR Employee Reflects on Professional Bowling Career

If Paul Reed wasn't at home or at work, he probably was at the bowling alley. Yet despite his passion for the sport and success as a league and tournament player, Reed never imagined he had the skills to bowl professionally.

It turns out he was wrong.

"I've been bowling since age 5," said the 58-year-old Reed, a DEPTCOR industrial manager who has been employed by the New Jersey Department of Corrections for 36 years. "Like a lot of other little kids, I'd go with Daddy to the lanes. At first, you watch, and eventually, you get your own lane and start bowling. So my love for the sport developed at a very early age."



Bowling has been part of Paul Reed's life since age 5.

That love manifested itself into countless hours spent on the lanes – competing, refining his skills, collecting hardware for his many triumphs and compiling an average that peaked at an astounding 238.

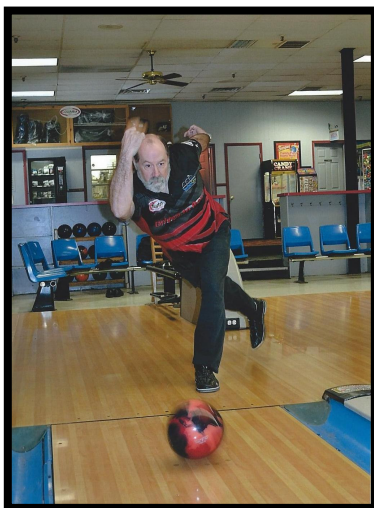
However, it wasn't until a chance encounter back in 1994 with William Mose, a professional bowler Reed had first met while in the Army, that he considered viewing bowling as something more than a hobby. Mose, Reed recalled, "approached me and said, 'You throw a pretty good ball. Ever think about going professional?' The truth is, I hadn't, but that was when I began to contemplate it."

Shortly thereafter, Reed made his pro debut at a Professional Bowlers Association (PBA) regional event. The regional competitions serve as steppingstones to PBA national events, which often receive network television exposure.

"I didn't do as well as I might have hoped in that first event, but once I got a taste of it, I wanted to do it again and again," he related.

Unlike sports such as baseball, football, basketball and even golf, bowling is not a sport in which participants potentially earn seven- or eight-figure incomes. The first-place payoff at a major PBA event is unlikely to exceed \$75,000. As a result, all but the top pro bowlers have jobs away from the lanes.

That includes Paul Reed.



Paul Reed displays the form that has enabled him to bowl professionally.

"Fortunately, when I first turned pro, I had my weekends open, and there were a fair number of regional events up and down the East Coast that I could get to," he said.

There were some PBA national events along the way as well. For decades, the championship round of those events was televised live on Saturday afternoon by ABC TV. Those championship rounds were five-man affairs that were contested in a "stepladder" format that saw the fourth-place and fifth-place bowlers square off, with the winner facing the third-place bowler. The winner then challenged the second-place bowler, and the winner of that match met the tournament leader for the championship.

Reed was able to qualify for the televised finals once – at the 1995 Southwest PBA Invitational in Fort Worth, Texas. As the number-five seed, he lost to highly regarded pro Butch Soper, the fourth seed, 256-211.

“They had to turn the machines off, because my knees were knocking together so hard that they thought the machines were malfunctioning,” Reed joked. “As nervous as I was, it was a great thrill for me, even though Butch pretty much took me to school.”

Reed estimates that he’s earned \$110,000 during his 20-year career.

“It’s not a great amount,” he said, “but it’s certainly been a great ride.”

The ride continues for Reed, who still bowls in at least six pro events per year and remains devoted to the sport. In fact, until seriously injuring his right shoulder three years ago, he was bowling roughly 120 games per week.

“Once I’d completed my duties with the NJDOC, I’d travel the Woodbridge Bowling Center, where I operated the Pro Shop. I’d get there as early as possible, grab my equipment, get out on the lanes and bowl for one to two hours.

“Nowadays, I’m good for maybe 60 games per week,” he added. “As you get older, and your body begins to break down, you have to adjust. I’m still bowling enough to maintain my skills and my average,” which now hovers around 230.

During the course of his career, Reed has rolled 23 300 games (a perfect score), posted a three-game series of 878 (300-278-300) and converted the near-impossible 7-10 split on three occasions. Yet it is his work as an ambassador for the sport – particularly his interaction with youngsters who are new to bowling – that he finds more gratifying than any individual accomplishments.

“You see a kid throwing gutter ball after gutter ball, so you approach him and work with him for a while,” Reed said. “Then he throws a ball that knocks down one pin, and the kid gets so excited that you think he’d just won the lottery. That smile and that willingness to get back out there and continue to improve, it just pumps you up more than you can imagine.

“If I can work with even a small group of kids and give them an opportunity to achieve, to build their self-confidence through bowling, it might be one less kid who comes to the New Jersey Department of Corrections as an inmate.”





SPRING 2014



Taylor Made

Four Lives Saved During Daring Rescue in Delaware River

It was chilly, rainy and generally miserable on the evening of April 15, so it was hardly surprising to Darnell and Laura Taylor that both their 11-year old son's baseball game and their 8-year old daughter's softball game were postponed. In anticipation of the games, Laura Taylor hadn't prepared anything for dinner, so the couple decided to go out to eat.

That decision ultimately saved four lives.

"Near where we live in Florence, there's a boat ramp that goes down to the Delaware River," said Laura Taylor, a secretarial assistant in the New Jersey Department of Corrections' Custody Recruitment Unit. "As I drove past the ramp, my husband happened to glance toward the river and suddenly said, 'Oh, my God, there's a car floating in the river.' I immediately looked and saw a vehicle that appeared to be more than halfway submerged in the water.

"I pulled off to the side of the road and asked Darnell what we should do," she continued. "He said that he'd call 911 and that I should turn around and go back. I wanted to know what we'd do if there were people in the vehicle. My husband



When Laura and Darnell Taylor saw a vehicle floating in the Delaware River, they acted decisively and heroically.

said he'd jump into the river and try to save them."

That led Laura Taylor to ask a question that she regarded as critically important.

"I asked Darnell if he knew how to swim," she related. "We've been together for 17 years, and in all that time, I never saw him swim."

Even though Taylor's husband assured her he was a capable swimmer, she was terrified by the thought of watching him dive into the river.

"The weather was awful, it was dark, and you could tell the waters were rough," she said. "And who knows what's in the Delaware River?"

Almost as soon as they parked by the boat ramp, the couple's fears were confirmed. Not only were they able to detect movement in the partially submerged vehicle, which they realized was a van, but they could hear the screams of a frantic girl coming from the van.

Darnell Taylor, who was in the midst of his 911 call, handed his cell phone to his oldest daughter Kayla, 15, the only one of the couple's four children who was with them at the time, removed his jacket and plunged into the river. Laura Taylor headed toward the road in search of help.

"First, I tried to flag down drivers, but I couldn't get anyone to stop," she said. "So I went to the snack shop across the street, totally panicked, and started screaming that I needed an axe, a fire extinguisher or something to break the window of the van. Once the owner understood what was happening, she went with me back to the river."

It turned out that neither the axe nor the fire extinguisher was necessary. Darnell Taylor instructed the girl who had been screaming – one of four passengers trapped in the van – to brace herself against a seat and use both feet to kick the side window out of the van. When she complied, he rescued her, then returned to help free the others.

The girl, a teenager, appeared to go into shock following her rescue.

"She was soaked, freezing and disoriented, and she kept saying her mother was still in the van," Laura Taylor recalled. "I was on top of her, trying to

keep her as warm as possible, and I kept assuring her that everything would be okay.”

However, what Laura Taylor couldn’t do was to convince herself that everything would be okay.

The girl’s two brothers, also teens, were the next to be rescued. When Darnell Taylor returned to the van yet again in search of the mother of the children, the vehicle was almost completely submerged.

“There was a moment when I looked up and didn’t see my husband, and I almost lost it,” Laura Taylor reported. “Fortunately, my daughter told me not to worry, that she was keeping track of where he was at all times.”

A few moments later, he emerged from the water with the mother of the teens, who had driven the van – intentionally, according to published reports – into the river. By then, EMTs and police had arrived, and the Taylors prepared to exit.

They went home, showered, finally went out to dinner and visited the police station, where they provided a statement on the night’s events.

“While we were eating, we kept asking ourselves if the whole thing really happened,” Laura Taylor said. “It was almost surreal.

“Fortunately, my husband always has been able to maintain his composure under pressure. Even after this episode, he kept his cool. All he said was that he’d used muscles that he hadn’t used in a long time.”

For several days after the incident, Darnell Taylor was hailed as a hero in the media. Taylor himself respectfully disagreed.

“For Darnell – for both of us, actually – it’s just a matter of being a good citizen,” said Laura Taylor, who, like her spouse, is active in her town’s youth sports programs as well as various charitable endeavors. “If people are in need of help, it would be hard to imagine not helping.”

The day after the ordeal, Darnell Taylor, a medical security officer at Ann Klein Forensic Center, discussed what had transpired with his father, Levi, who spent 26 years with the NJDOC and the Juvenile Justice Commission, retiring in 1996 as a corrections lieutenant. Almost three decades ago, Levi

Taylor received a heroism award from the NJDOC and an acknowledgement from then-Governor Thomas Kean after helping to rescue inmates during a fire.

"Darnell's dad was so proud," Laura Taylor said. "He told him, 'Looks like you one-upped me.' "

Later that day, Levi Taylor, who had been ill for an extended period, died.

"My sister-in-law told me that after he'd heard about what Darnell did, that was the happiest she'd seen him in months," Laura Taylor said. "We're so grateful that we were able to share our story with him and make him proud one last time."





SPRING 2014



In Memoriam

'World's Fastest Human,' a Former NJDOC Employee, Dies at Age 74

He spent almost 15 years with the New Jersey Department of Corrections, serving as an Equal Employment Opportunity Officer, an Affirmative Action Officer and, at the time of his retirement in 2002, a Program Development Assistant.

By the time he came to work for the NJDOC, he was known worldwide for his athletic achievements. Not only did he play in the National Football League, but he represented the United States as a sprinter in the Olympics and once was considered the world's fastest human after a record-setting performance in the 100-yard dash.

He was Francis J. Budd, better known as Frank, and he died of natural causes on April 29 in Marlton. He was 74.

Despite liver and kidney problems as a youth, Mr. Budd was an exceptional athlete who starred in baseball, football and track at Asbury Park High School. In 1960, two years after his high school graduation, Mr. Budd competed in the 1960 Summer Olympic Games, which were held in Rome. He placed fifth in the 100-meter dash and was part of the American 100-meter relay quartet that finished in first place in world-record



While he was a member of the Villanova University track time, Frank Budd established a new world record in the 100-yard dash.

time but was disqualified because one of the team members handed off the baton outside the passing zone.

The following summer, while a member of the Villanova University track team, which was coached by the legendary Jumbo Elliot, Mr. Budd established a world record in the 100-yard dash with a time of 9.2 seconds during the Amateur Athletic Union championships on Randall's Island in Manhattan. In doing so, he became widely known as the world's fastest human, a title he maintained until 1963, when Bob Hayes – another track star who later played in the National Football League – lowered the record to 9.1 seconds. The weekend before Mr. Budd's record-breaking race, he had won both the 100-yard and 220-yard sprints at the NCAA championship meet in Philadelphia.

In 1962, Mr. Budd gave up a possible opportunity to take part in the 1964 Summer Olympics and signed with the Philadelphia Eagles, who had drafted him in the seventh round even though he hadn't played football while at Villanova. He played in 13 games with the Eagles as a wide receiver and kick returner. The next season, he filled the same roles for the Washington Redskins, before moving to the Canadian Football League, where he was a member of the Calgary Stampeders for three seasons.

Once his athletic career ended, Mr. Budd held positions with the Philadelphia parks system and a casino in Atlantic City as well as the NJDOC.

Mr. Budd is survived by wife Barbara, two daughters, a son, nine grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.



Francis J. Budd



SPRING 2014



Life Savers

Trio of Northern State Prison Officers Come Together during Medical Emergency

It was shortly after 7 p.m. on January 27 when Senior Correction Officer Jose Lopez saw James Nwaogwugwu, a nurse and longtime acquaintance, making his way down a hallway in Northern State Prison. The officer briefly glanced to his left, and when he looked back to his right, where Nwaogwugwu had been walking, he saw the nurse lying face down on the floor.

"Another officer and I rushed to Nurse James, turned him over and called out his name, but he wasn't responding," related Lopez, a New Jersey Department of Corrections employee for two years. "I immediately called a Code 53 (medical emergency)."

The nurse appeared to have suffered a heart attack.

"He seemed to be breathing when I first got to him, but then he stopped."

Within moments, Sgt. Jon Maistrow, who has more than 16 years of experience as an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT), and SCO Dwight Kea responded to the code.

"I knelt down next to [Nwaogwugwu] and started a medical evaluation," said Maistrow, who serves as an EMT and firefighter for the New Market Fire Company in Piscataway. "He seemed to be breathing when I first got to him, but then he stopped. At that point, I yelled for someone to grab the AED (Automated External Defibrillator) and ripped his shirt open."

Kea went to the nurse's head and began administering rescue breathing. Maistrow put the AED pads in place, turned on the machine, cleared onlookers and shocked the nurse. After a series of chest compressions, a second shock was delivered, followed by a third.

Finally, Nwaogwugwu's pulse was restored, and he was able to breathe on his own. However, the nurse's breathing was labored, so Kea maintained rescue breathing until the arrival of EMTs.

"In training class, we were taught to keep doing CPR until qualified medical personnel arrive to assist you, so that's just what I did," said Kea, a member of the NJDOC custody staff for 22 years. "Fortunately, because of the sergeant's experience, he was able to guide us through the process."

Maistrow remained hopeful that Nwaogwugwu would be saved even after the nurse had stopped breathing.

"I thought we had a chance, because we were right there very soon after it happened," he said. "The 'defib' was on him within minutes of him falling down, so the chances of success were much greater than they otherwise might have been.

"You have to stay calm and collected, and that's what the three of us did," he continued. "We knew what we had to do, and we were able to work together throughout the process."

Because of his years as an EMT, Maistrow has had significant experience with life-and-death medical emergencies. Neither Kea nor Lopez, however, had ever been in a similar situation.

"When I learned CPR, I worked on a dummy," Kea recalled. "When the sergeant set up the AED and said 'Shock advise. Stand by,' it was an altogether different feeling. This was real."

The day after the incident, Maistrow visited Nwaogwugwu in the hospital. The patient was heavily sedated and hooked up to a ventilator, but the sergeant had an opportunity to meet with the nurse's wife and daughter.

A short time later, both Maistrow and Lopez returned to the hospital to see Nwaogwugwu. This time, the nurse was sitting up in his bed, and he and his family members were praying.

"When he saw us, he started to well up," said Maistrow who has been with the NJDOC for a decade. "He eventually got up, hugged us and thanked us. I'm not an emotional kind of guy, but I have to say, that was pretty moving."

Added Lopez: "Just to see him up and around, compared to the way he was a few weeks earlier, was really encouraging."

Nwaogwugwu still hasn't returned to the prison, but he remains in the thoughts of his co-workers, especially the three officers who saved his life.

"He's a real nice guy," Kea reported. "Not only does he have a great sense of humor, but he's one of those people who would give you the shirt off his back."

"I've thought a lot about what happened. We all have. I'm so thankful that we were able to save a family from grief, that we can see him alive and recovering instead of seeing him at a burial site."





SPRING 2014



For the Birds

Stone Harbor Tabs Clean Shores Program To Beautify National Natural Landmark

Memorial Day weekend marked the unofficial beginning of the summer vacation season for resort communities across New Jersey. Stone Harbor in Cape May County, which occupies the southern portion of Seven Mile Island together with neighboring Avalon, is no different.

One of the borough's most popular attractions is its bird sanctuary, described on the Stone Harbor Web site as "a wonderfully preserved microcosm of what the barrier islands of New Jersey looked like hundreds of years ago." Created in 1947, the bird sanctuary was designated by the United States Park Service as a National Natural Landmark in 1965.

As recently as mid-March, however, the site looked more like a jungle than a landmark, so the borough reached out to the Clean Shores Program for assistance.

Clean Shores is an initiative through which the state's Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) partners with the New Jersey Department of Corrections to utilize minimum custody inmates to clean shorelines. The program, which is funded through the sale of "Shore to Please" license plates, has cleaned and re-cleaned more than 2,600 miles of the state's shorelines since its inception in 1989.



Joining Major Joe Polyi (far left) and Senior Correction Officer Shawn Tracy (second from left) at the bird sanctuary in Stone Harbor are inmates (clockwise, from left) Rasheed Manns, Dwight Brockenbaugh, Ronnie Rodriguez and Jason Meyer.

As March was about to turn into April, an inmate labor detail from Bayside State Prison was assigned to beautify the bird sanctuary.

"When you compare the way this place looked when we got here to what it looks like now, you feel a real sense of accomplishment," said inmate Jason Meyer. "We know we've done something that will benefit the environment and benefit the state of New Jersey – and that's a nice feeling."

The inmates' were undaunted by the remnants from a snowstorm that coated the area just a few days before they arrived.

"These guys work hard. They work hard every day," said Sgt. Robert Ziegler, the Southern Region's regional detail supervisor. "They're willing to work around the snow. In fact, when we have to cancel details because of inclement weather, they're unhappy. They realize the impact that what they're doing has on the communities where they're working."

"Furthermore," he continued, "when they see the results of their efforts, it makes them feel good about themselves."



Inmates Jason Meyer (left) and Rasheed Manns clean up the bird sanctuary.

Senior Correction Officer Shawn Tracy pointed out that an inmate whose work ethic is lacking is easily identifiable and quickly replaced. Most members of the detail, he added, are willing to do what it required of them.

"They seem to like it," Tracy said. "Of course, they'd rather be outdoors than in jail, but there's more to it than that. A lot of these guys grew up in the inner-city, and here they are, working in a bird sanctuary. This is different than anything they've ever done."

Inmate Dwight Brockenbough agreed with the officer's observation.

"I'm glad to be helping out the community, but this is also a good thing for me personally," he said. "I like the fresh air and the exercise. Even more important, being out here relaxes my mind and relieves stress, so I appreciate the opportunity to do this."

DEP official Larry Sutton noted that the beneficiaries of Clean Shores are not limited to inmates and communities.

"Corrections and DEP are coming together to provide a cost-effective, worthwhile program to towns throughout the state," he stated. "That's how government is supposed to work."

The cleanup of the bird sanctuary marked Jason Meyer's first visit to Stone Harbor, but it may not be his last. Since he anticipates that his next trip to the borough will come after the expiration of his sentence, he will not be accompanied by a group of orange-clad offenders.

"I never knew this bird sanctuary existed," Meyer admitted. "Now that I do, I'm thinking that once my child is old enough the have an appreciation of nature and the environment, this would be a nice place to take him."





SPRING 2014



Lending a hand

Mid-State Inmates Show Willingness To Support Charitable Causes

It might not be considered newsworthy that a group of churchgoers based in Wrightstown made a donation to UNICEF last December to help those in the Philippines begin to rebuild their lives after the massive destruction caused by Typhoon Haiyan. However, what made the donation of \$176.50 unique is that it was made by inmates who attend Rev. Carl Browne's services at Mid-State Correctional Facility.

Four months later – on Palm Sunday, just a few weeks before Mid-State was closed for renovations – the same group of worshippers collected \$474 on behalf of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America's Malaria Campaign.

"The inmates came up with the idea, they selected the charities they wanted to support – they researched the percentage of each donation that went to the actual cause, as opposed to overhead –

and they saw it through," Browne related. "They were motivated by a desire to help those in need, which is an indication that they have begun to shift their focus. Many inmates are focused inwardly, but these men are now focusing on the outside. They are becoming increasingly aware of the world around them."

"Many inmates are focused inwardly, but these men are now focusing on the outside. They are becoming increasingly aware of the world around them."

When inmate Sean McGuirk was first made aware of the possibility of inmates supporting a charitable endeavor, he was admittedly unsure how many of his fellow offenders might share his enthusiasm.

"As inmates, you don't have much in the way of finances," he said. "I was hoping for the best, but I found the overall response to be pretty overwhelming. It seemed as if everyone realized the need that existed as well as what could be accomplished collectively."

"When a man is in prison, it can be dehumanizing," he continued, "but the fact that these men were willing to do what they could to help meet the needs of strangers shows that there's more to this population than a uniform and a charge."

When inmate Wayne Whitfield saw the response to the UNICEF campaign, he vowed to do what he could to make certain the charitable trend would continue.

"Once we saw what was possible, it would have been a shame to stop," he noted. "The amount of money raised wasn't what's most important. The thing that really mattered was the willingness of so many people to participate."

Through his participation, Whitfield learned lessons about himself that he hadn't known – or perhaps that he had known but wouldn't acknowledge.

"When I was on the streets, I didn't give anything to charities," he confessed, "but what I've done, what so many of us here have done, has lifted my spirits so much. It's just amazing."

